

Vista Grande High School is now accepting applications for School Director.

Deadline for application submission is June 16, 2010.

How to apply:

Application must be submitted by email to taoselschool@gmail.com

Please submit the following in a PDF format:

- Resume
- Three current professional letters of recommendation including cell and work phone numbers and email addresses for references
- Letter of interest defining the strengths you bring to the position and your educational and leadership philosophy.

Interviews of final candidates will be conducted June 23.

Vista Grande High School is an Equal Opportunity Employer.

Background:

Vista Grande High School is an Expeditionary Learning Outward Bound School that emphasizes thematic integrated learning. Our teachers plan the curriculum together, integrating their subjects into long-term thematic units called "Learning Expeditions." We're committed to developing the whole student—head, heart and hands--not just the academic side. Our schedule combines academics with outdoor adventure, team building and service learning. We place importance upon character development, physical challenge, and artistic growth as well as nurturing the intellect. We emphasize learning through direct experience by involving students in the community and natural environment. We also emphasize community service and community mentorships for students. Now, VGHS community is seeking a new School Director, a visionary leader with experience and enthusiasm, for these approaches. VGHS is in its fourth year and our current enrollment capacity is for 120 students.

The school is located Taos, New Mexico.

Our culturally diverse student population is 25% Native American, 50% Hispanic and 25% Caucasian.

POSITION: VISTA GRANDE HIGH SCHOOL DIRECTOR

Reports to: Vista Grande Governing Council

Contract begins July 1, 2010. Salary: \$80,000

Qualifications:

Possession of/ or ability to obtain the required New Mexico Level III-B Administrative license.

- Master in Education and minimum 5 years of teaching experience
- Strong commitment and experience with expeditionary and place-based outdoor education
- Experience in effective instructional strategies, honoring diverse learning modalities
- Demonstrated ability to support and supervise teachers
- Experience in competently managing complex schedules, public school reporting requirements and budgets
- Ability to work collaboratively with parent groups and District personnel
- Familiarity with core knowledge curriculum
- Strong community networking skills
- Ability to effect creative fundraising efforts
- Ability to work well in a culturally diverse community

High School Directors Authority:

The Vista Grande High School Governing Council designates the Director as the educational leader and chief administrator of the school. With the exception of responsibilities outlined in Vista Grande High School Charter and State Statutes, to be carried out by the Governing Council, the Director has the authority and responsibility to develop, update and revise all procedures to implement each policy of the Governing Council and the School's Charter. Significant procedural and personal changes must be communicated to the Governing Council.

Responsibilities and Deliverables:

The Director's ultimate responsibility is to carry out the Vista Grande High School Charter's mission and philosophy:

Vista Grande High School Mission: To nurture and prepare high school youth in a highly personalized, hands-on learning environment so that each student may become a self confident, competent, respectful and contributing member of our society."

Philosophy: Vista Grande High School is an Expeditionary Learning Outward Bound school. We believe learning is most dynamic when students are given hands-on experiences that reach a wide range of learning styles. We have a strong emphasis on integrated learning, tying multiple academic subjects through Learning Expeditions (long term, in-depth investigations of themes or topics that engage students in the classroom and in the wider world through authentic projects, field work and service). We have a strong focus on community involvement. Vista Grande High collaborates with many community partners to maximize the development of our students as future community leaders.

In order to achieve this end the school director is responsible for the following:

- I. **Leadership and Ethics** – The principal promotes the success of all students by maintaining a culture that inspires student achievement, high quality instruction, and faculty and staff professional development to meet the diverse learning needs of the school community. The director is responsible for leading the vision of the VGHS charter through ethical leadership, wise decision making and compassionate behavior that fosters excellence and ethical conduct amongst the school community.
 - a. Faculty and Staff
 - i. Hires, mentors, leads and inspires Vista Grande High School faculty and staff to ensure students meet or exceed their goals through Expeditionary Learning and field learning.
 - ii. Provides clear leadership within a highly collaborative school environment
 - b. Students
 - i. Spearheads a culture of student academic achievement and character development that engages, challenges, and inspires youth to succeed beyond their post secondary education.
 - ii. Fosters opportunities that link outdoor physical adventure with academic rigor

- iii. Creates a responsive, flexible and nimble academic structure that addresses strengths and weakness as well as issues specific to all students (all the way from high performing to underachieving youths)
- c. Parents and Community
 - i. Leads, educates and inspires parents and community stakeholders to support their children in their academic and character development
 - ii. Develops strong partnerships with diverse community organizations, businesses and individuals in order to fulfill the Charter's greater goal of community service and membership.

II. Stakeholder Relationships and Deliverables

- a. Faculty and Staff
 - i. Assumes responsibility for developing full implementation of the Expeditionary Learning design among staff
(EL Core Practices and Benchmarks: 1) learning expeditions, 2) active pedagogy, 3) culture and character, 4) leadership and school improvement and 5) structures)
 - ii. Manages all matters regarding hiring, retention, licensure, waivers, salaries, contracts, job descriptions and revision, supervision, evaluation, discipline and termination or discharge of all employees of the school
 - iii. Reinforces and institutionalizes the implementation of Expeditionary Learning practices through regular observation, coaching and evaluation
 - iv. Works closely with the school designer and instructional guide to ensure adequate instructional support, plan professional development and maximize the benefit of on and off-site professional development opportunities
 - v. Outlines and monitors clear, measurable goals for faculty, staff and school performance.
 - vi. Observes teacher classroom practices and evaluates performance of Expeditionary Learning models, PED criteria, job descriptions, ethics and teacher's personal development plans
 - vii. Attends and facilitates weekly staff meetings to ensure student support and faculty and staff productivity is optimized
 - viii. Ensures that school structures are in place for monthly team planning and mid-fall and mid-spring evaluations
 - ix. Develops and implements a faculty and staff professional development plan that is based on data-driven assessments, current research findings, class observations and metrics on students growth.
 - x. Develops and conducts Teacher Evaluations above and beyond that required by NMPED in order to ensure agile responsiveness to either educational deficiencies or best practices.

- b. Students
 - i. Creates in collaboration with the governing council, and update monthly, a variety of transparent, relevant metrics that demonstrate student growth and academic performance relative to Expeditionary Learning and State standards, and those reflected in the School's charter and Governing Council policies.
 - ii. Spearheads a student integration and orientation program that outlines school culture and expectations of the student body by the school
 - iii. Empowers student participation in the school's mission and vision through the establishment of a student council which fosters feedback and communication between the director, staff and the student body.
 - iv. Implements a pro-active student recruitment and retention program
 - v. Implements a state of the art youth leadership coaching program to inspire positive, compassionate character development and initiative amongst students.
 - vi. Implements outdoor adventure and field work opportunities which integrate the core curriculum through wilderness and field work expeditions. Participates with students and staff in a minimum of one wilderness expedition per year
 - vii. Implements a daily physical fitness program for all students
 - viii. Understands the needs of each student (from high performing to underachieving youth) and provides a supportive structure which empowers them to succeed.
 - ix. Builds support structures that provide time for knowing students individually and allowing for student specific education plans and guidance.
 - x. Facilitates the R-T-I (Response To Intervention) approach for handling student behavior and academic habits of work
 - xi. Ensures that students receive the requisite support through Title 1, Special Education, ELL and/or other services as needed to ensure their success
 - xii. Supports the Crew (advisory system) and leads a crew
- c. Parents
 - i. Creates open channels of parent-teacher communication that keep parents updated monthly on student performance
 - ii. Develops a parent-teacher organization that represents the diversity of the school
 - iii. Develops regular ongoing community communication tools:
 - aa. a monthly newsletter (both hardcopy and electronic) with monthly student performance metrics and attendance, an up-to-date calendar of outings, events and service projects and individual student accomplishment to be distributed to parents, the board and the community.
 - bb. an annual school community calendar prepared in advance by June 1 for the next academic year
 - iv. Documents trends in parent involvement and presents to the board bi-annually.
 - v. Identifies talent and skills in the Parent Body for support of the school.
- d. Donors and Supporters
 - i. Presents a fundraising plan prior to the beginning of each academic year
 - ii. Recruits community support for fundraising (grant writers, fundraising events, etc.)
 - iii. Directs and participates in development efforts including grant writing and fundraising events with the initial minimum goal of generating additional revenues that equal roughly 5% of the operating budget

- e. Community
 - i. Collaborates at the beginning of each year with teachers, students, parents and the community at large to develop an updated annual strategic plan to fulfill the mission and vision and annual goals of Vista Grande High School
 - ii. Proactively increases public visibility of Vista Grande’s unique outdoor expeditionary learning model and successes. Works with local media to create a positive image for public support of the school and increase student enrollment.
 - iii. Develops strategic partnerships with staff, parents, business, agencies and community organizations that expand the schools presence, stewardship and impact in the region
 - iv. Employs a system to thank community members in a timely manner for their donations to or participation with Vista Grande High School
- f. Governing Council
 - i. Attends governing council meetings, provides timely input and documentation for agenda items and takes responsibility for follow-up of agenda items as needed
 - ii. Anticipates and communicates matters which may require Governing Council awareness and attention
 - iii. Is responsible for reciprocal communication supporting the Governing Council in communicating issues to staff and the school community while regularly reporting to the council on school activities and relevant matter
 - iv. Assists the Governing Council in fulfilling the requirements for charter renewal
 - v. Reports to the Governing Council monthly with specific metrics as requested and outlined in this herein job description (e.g. student performance, financial standing, reporting requirements met, parent-teacher involvement, progress report on community partner development and community service, fundraising efforts etc.)
 - vi. Reports quarterly on the progress towards the achievement of Faculty and staff evaluations and development plans, the Director’s Professional Development Plan, and an updated annual schedule of reporting requirement deadlines

III. Business, Finances, Facilities and Management

- a. Ensures the financial viability of Vista Grande High School
- b. Directs the timely preparation, administration and execution of the annual school budget in collaboration with the governing council
- c. Ensures the school is in compliance with all applicable laws, regulations, reporting requirements and federal and state programs
- d. Maintains a positive net balance on VGHS’s monthly balance sheet
- e. Maintains and directs, through delegation with oversight, the records for: personnel, students, accounting, business and other records as required by law or Governing Council policy
- f. Stays current with reporting requirements to authorizer, Taos Municipal School District
- g. Is prompt and current with all accounts payable
- h. Oversees facilities maintenance and management with an effective facilities plan
- i. Works to secure an inspiring permanent campus for Vista Grande High School
- j. Supports requests from the school’s non-profit foundation

IV. Administration

- a. Supervises the activities of all employees to ensure safe supportive and productive environment for students, staff and families

- b. Ensures the school meets requirements of national law, state statutes, Public Education Department, Charter mandates and accrediting body
 - c. Promotes and models the teachings and use of sound environmental practices
 - d. Creates a clear, written system of ongoing administrative details and requirements including a calendar to establish institutional memory to ensure smooth transitions with turnover of personnel
- V. Director Professional Development**
- a. Annually updates and presents to the Governing Council a reflective, strategic plan for the Director's personal professional development with desired outcomes and resources required to accomplish such

The school director will be evaluated on their implementation of the above responsibilities and procedures in a systematic, bi-annual evaluation process conducted by the Governing Council.